

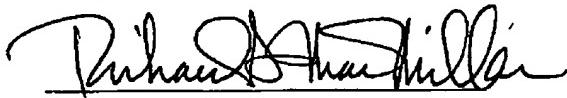
REMARKS

The courtesy of the Examiner in granting the undersigned attorney a personal interview on July 21, 2005 is gratefully acknowledged. During that interview, the language of Claim 9 was discussed in light of the Kidikoro '185 reference. As noted on the Examiner Interview Summary Record, it was agreed that Claim 9 would overcome the prior art rejection at that time if amended as presented herein.

In the subsequent Office Action dated September 12, 2005, the Examiner rejected the pending claims under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by the newly applied Sakai '079 reference. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The issue date of the Sakai '079 reference is June 27, 2000. The present application, however, has an effective filing date of September 20, 1999, which is the filing date of the grandparent provisional application. Thus, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) is inappropriate because the invention was not "patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of the application for patent in the United States," as set forth in that statute. A rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) would appear to be more appropriate under these circumstances, and such a rejection would afford the applicant the opportunity to swear behind the Sakai '079 reference if deemed appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,



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